

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5, 11, and 15 are pending in the present application. Claims 4, 6-10, 13, and 14 have been cancelled in this Reply without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

(a) Claims 4, 6, 8, 13, and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cho (USP 5,396,287) in view of Freeman (USP 5,289,168). In the Reply, Applicant has cancelled rejected claims 4, 6, 8, 13, and 14, thereby rendering this grounds of rejection moot.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

(b) Claims 13 and 7-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda et al. (US 2002/0110354) in view of Freeman. In this Reply, Applicant has cancelled claims 13 and 7-8, thereby rendering this grounds of rejection moot.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

(c) Claims 13 and 9-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ito et al. (US 5,671,014) in view of Freeman. In this Reply, Applicant has rejected claims 13 and 9-10, thereby rendering this grounds of rejection moot.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

Allowable Subject Mater

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 1, 3, 5, 11, and 15 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Conclusion

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the pending claims in the present application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Reply After Final in that it raises no new issues, and instead places this application in clear condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (Reg. No. 40,417) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees

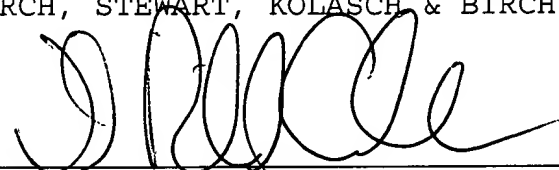
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required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Richard Anderson', written over a horizontal line.

D. Richard Anderson, #40,439

DRA:MH/mh:pjh
0879-0235P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000